01038

1972/10/06

WD # 03097

~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE

Saigon, Viet-Nam
October 6, 1972

Dear Mr. President:

I have received a message from President Nixon which he has asked me to convey personally to you.

Personal Message From

President Nixon to President Thieu

I have discussed with General Haig the outcome of his meetings with you and your associates in Saigon. There is no doubt that there are serious disagreements between us, but it should be clearly understood that these disagreements are tactical in character and involve no basic difference as to the objectives we both seek -- the preservation of a non-communist structure in South Viet-Nam which we have so patiently built together and which your heroic leadership has preserved against the most difficult of trials. Therefore, I give you my firm assurance that there will be no settlement arrived at, the provisions of which have not been discussed personally with you well beforehand. This applies specifically to the next round of talks in Paris. In these talks, Dr. Kissinger will explore what concrete security guarantees the other side is willing to give us as the basis for further discussions on the political point which might be undertaken following consultations with you. In this context, I would urge you to take every measure to avoid the development of an atmosphere which could lead to events similar to those which we abhorred in 1963 and which I personally opposed so vehemently in 1968. For this same reason, I would hope that you would also avoid taking precautionary measures against

His Excellency Nguyen Van Thieu
President of the Republic of Viet-Nam
Saigon, Viet-Nam

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.6
NLR 95-93 #24 State ltr. 4/18/96
By KBH NARA, Date 5/9/96

Declassified
Photocopy from Gerald R. Ford Library

~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE

developments arising from these talks which, I assure you, would never arise without full, timely and complete consultation between us.

At the same time, however, we cannot be sure at any point in the process that the enemy will not for propaganda or other reasons make public the details of the secret talks. U. S. tactics thus far have been designed to take account of this contingency. General Haig informed me that you would be writing to me in the near future. I look forward to receiving this communication and hope that you will have had an opportunity to consider the foregoing before completing that message.

President Richard M. Nixon

With renewed assurances of my highest consideration,

Sincerely,

Ellsworth Bunker
American Ambassador

Declassified
Photocopy from Gerald R. Ford Library